

MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 4

JAN. 28-FEB. 3

Terrorist Worries

TBS MOVES CLASH FROM CNN CENTER

ATLANTA---Wednesday night's CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS XIV was moved by Turner Broadcasting System officials after concerns increased over security in the CNN Center complex.

Since the Persian Gulf War erupted Jan. 16, security has been tightened throughout the building because of heightened fears of possible terrorist attacks at the downtown Atlanta highrise, which has been a news communications center to the world since the crisis started.

The decision to move CLASH to the Georgia Mountain Center in Gainesville, about an hour northeast of Atlanta, was made last Monday.

"We just looked at all the factors and felt it was not the best thing to do right now," said a TBS executive, who asked not to be named. The CLASH was scheduled to air live from the atrium of CNN Center, the former Omni International Hotel, an area adjacent to a sprawling food court within the building. "Besides, TBS considered the fact that it was probably less than appropriate to be holding a live wrestling show just a few feet down the hall from where round-the-clock coverage of a war was in progress. It just wouldn't have been in good taste."

Some WCW officials argued against the move after extensive promotion had been aired on the site, in addition to giving the wrestling company only the past weekend to alert Atlanta fans to the site change. But TBS executives prevailed. The Turner people are not ruling out a future CLASH from the atrium.

The Georgia Mountain Center is a 3,000-seat arena where WCW syndicated and TBS tapings have previously been held. For the first time, TBS aired a repeat of the CLASH immediately after its live showing.

A War for Dollars

VINCE: BENEATH CONTEMPT ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK

America is spending more than \$1 billion a day fighting the Persian Gulf War. Vince McMahon will probably gross \$30-50 million off of it. And I am repulsed.

The publicity machine has already cranked, the milk job of sending Hulk Hogan into carefully-marketed military base tours is in progress and the plants in top media outlets are spreading like terminal cancer. And despite a ton of World Wrestling Federation fans and wrestling insiders who find this to be a genius of a profitmaking storyline ("It's just wrestling," I'm being repeatedly told), I'll stand alone if I am the only one who says exploiting a war while it is in progress as families wait nervously at home is the ultimate sign that McMahon is finally out of control, a self-centered megalomaniac totally insensitive to the broader picture of human emotion.



When you write your letters in dispute to me, please understand: I am not against this man making money and lots of it as he has the last seven years. My feelings are not predicated on whether we should or should not be in the Gulf. Dissent on that question is healthy and if you are opposed to the war, I support your right to express it loudly.

But there is a line which, eventually, entertainment producers have a responsibility not to cross. In this case, it is a moral one that should take broad precedence over cash registers.

Wrestling has always, far before McMahon, made a profit on topicality and exploitation, even exaggeration, of current issues. But when McMahon ran his hugely successful Sgt. Slaughter-Iron Sheik series in the mid-1980s, it was four years AFTER our Iranian hostages had been released. America had not yet had a catharsis to be able to say we'd gained revenge on a lunatic and this, years later, was a chance in a more timely perspective.

The stereotypical German and Japanese heel characters expanded AFTER World War II, not while we were in the midst of that debilitating conflict. Vietnam was so polarizing, it never provided successful fodder for in-ring controversies, although one storyline was tried in Florida. Bob Roop accused Steve Keirn's father, a colonel in Vietnam and one-time POW, of being a coward, which launched a Keirn-Roop feud. That also was two years AFTER we had negotiated our way out of the Southeast Asia debacle.

How far Vince McMahon carries the intensity of the Sgt. Slaughter-Hulk Hogan prelims over the next eight weeks will determine the man's moral legacy, in my book. The fact that he will make big money (and mark my word, he will) from it is inconsequential. Carpetbaggers and bank robbers also periodically come away with big bucks. But if my distaste for McMahon carrying this thing out as a glorified p.r. campaign appears extreme; pardon me, but from where I have sat the past five months, this is not an issue at the moment for entertainment. Maybe two years, three years after we're out of Iraq but not now.

(Continued on Page 2)

STEVE BEVERLY

(Continued from Page 1)

Two Mondays ago, we sat in the home of a woman from Maury City, TN, who has four sons in Saudi Arabia and her fifth and final one is about to be sent. I watched her tears and her questions about why this is all happening. We've seen a set of grandparents having to care for twin six-month-old babies because both their mother and father are in the Gulf. We've shared in the moments of a support group of service wives in Dresden, TN, about 45 miles from us---trying to comfort each other as they hold onto hope that their husbands will be home in one piece. I've seen this war from a human and emotional side Vince McMahon has not because the microcosm of his world doesn't spread that far.

And what about America's hero, Hulk Hogan? Sending him to service camps doesn't bring one sensitive tear to my eye. This is a comic book character venturing into the real world strictly to raise the gate March 24. If there was any other motive behind it, then why isn't it Terry Bollea making these trips, without Gene Okerlund blasting it like an E-flat clarinet on television, not Hulk Hogan? Where is the responsibility "eat your vitamins, say your prayers" from Hogan, when he has enough power in the entire industry to tell McMahon to kill the storyline and succeed? Remember how many schools Hogan visited before conveniently-timed TV cameras prior to the NO HOLDS BARRED premiere? How many schools have you seen him traipse through since? The cameras will all be perfectly poised to follow Hogan through this choreographed junket and some mainstream media members who will buy it. I wonder how many military outfits he'll hit after WRESTLEMANIA?

The people I've spent the last few weeks with aren't the kind who find an American sergeant-turned-Iraqi sympathizer equivalent to fun and games. I read the valiant attempts of WWF p.r. honcho Steve Planamenta to pass this all off in USA TODAY with a "we don't mean to offend anyone" comment. When Planamenta calmly rattles the party line that "we're out to give people a happy ending," it shows yet a further insensitivity toward the grim, human realities of war. Even if we win in Iraq, there's not a happy feeling for families of POWs and we will have many, many families who will not have a happy ending when their relatives return home in pine boxes.

If THE NATIONAL is not available in your area, try to get a copy of last Tuesday's issue and read the impassioned, pointed, well-written remarks of our colleague Dave Meltzer. Dave has rattled a few of the WWF cages and justifiably so. I've been long told bootleg copies of MATWATCH reach the Titan headquarters and if so, rest assured that if Dave were running for political office, I'd make his nominating speech after his NATIONAL column.

McMahon's stubborn determination to foist this angle on the public, despite the repeated admonitions of some of his key staff members as late as hours before the ROYAL RUMBLE, is enough to elevate Chuck Barris to Shakespearean levels of entertainment. At least Barris used to tell you the GONG SHOW and THE NEWLYWED GAME were in bad taste.

Two other key points need to be considered here: first, the extraordinary risk McMahon runs with advertisers on his syndicated and cable TV shows. I know a bit about how fragile the advertising market is. Within a day after the war erupted, my television station and countless others like it

received faxes from at least a dozen national and regional advertisers asking for their spots to be pulled from any news coverage involving war or any adjacencies to programs centering on war, including any and all war movies or dramatic shows dealing with the Middle East. Most of McMahon's advertisers hawk youth-oriented (candy bars, milk, computer games) and male-targeted (colognes) products. My question: how can these companies continue to put their money behind a program with the kind of storyline as the Slaughter/Hussein ties? I've never been one to suggest boycotts because they're often misguided. But I would offer this proposal: if you're offended at the angle, make a list of McMahon's sponsors this weekend and write a short, specific letter to them, detailing your displeasure. I can assure you: letters in enough numbers to the advertisers will speak to McMahon in a way mere opinions do not. You have that right to speak out, just as those who support McMahon do. I intend to write.

Second, McMahon has succeeded already in getting a lot of talk generated about his WRESTLEMANIA and that is exactly what he intended. However, this time, the talk will not be the all-positive, fantasyland world he wants the country to believe the WWF is. He's cannot manipulate the media now like a marionette because of the nature of the times we are in---and because Meltzer's NATIONAL column, which reaches a heavy male demographic in the nation's largest cities, was not around in previous years when Vince attempted controversial and pseudo-tasteless storylines. THE NATIONAL may be fledgling but it, in itself, is a powerful weapon.

If exploiting an in-progress war is so important to you, Vince, let me offer you this challenge: why don't you contribute ten percent of your gate and pay-per-view revenues from WRESTLEMANIA to a fund to assist full-time service families and those of National Guard members who are losing income because of their callups to active duty from regular jobs? If their war is going to make you a bundle, why not give back some of it to those who are hurting the most?

Even better, it's not too late to regild some of your tarnish. Call the angle off and simply be honest enough to tell people, we were wrong. It was in poor taste. Sgt. Slaughter is suspended. Hold a four-man playoff for the belt at L.A. between Hogan, Warrior, Savage and Hennig. It would be a good-faith effort to regain a word which seems to be out of your vocabulary---respect.

The byword in the entire wrestling industry today seems to be desperation. Ole Anderson wants to revive the black audience, so he does so by turning his world champion into a taunting racist and makes Rocky King into a Buckwheat parody at a time when he had the perfect minority role model in Ron Simmons. In that case, African-Americans outsmarted Ole. They proved they were too smart to buy into that venom.

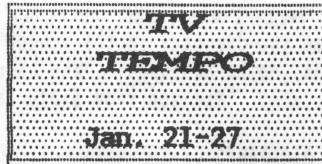
Vince McMahon is headed for a handsome profit on March 24. He is also, in my view, writing one of the most immoral legacies in the history of the oft-tainted wrestling industry. Until the last year, people have bought into almost everything he's tossed their way in the last seven. Dr. Gerald Morton, noted author and wrestling observer, and I have had many conversations that eventually McMahon would pull the string too far and it would snap. In my opinion, this is it.

McMahon has a standing offer to respond at any time on these pages without an editor's comment. Don't hold your breath waiting. But I leave you with this question, Vince. Would the Sgt. Slaughter storyline be so important to you if your son Sean were on the front lines in the Gulf? And if the answer is still yes, I'll ask you the same question the great attorney Joseph Welch once asked Sen. Joseph McCarthy. Have you no decency, Mr. McMahon? Have you no decency? Consider that while you count your WRESTLEMANIA millions.

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(PORTLAND) - Steve Doll d. Equalizer by DQ when Equalizer brings in chain. Doll gets it away & clotheslines

Eq w. chain; The Hood/Brad Anderson d. Larry Oliver/C.W. Bergstrom; Scott Norton d. Doug Masters; Bart Sawyer d. Grappler by DQ; (ROYAL RUMBLE) in progress as show ends; (PIESTA GARDEN) Sawyer appears w. Bart Simpson haircut. Madril hits, tries to cut hair but Doll/Norton save & the 3 cut Madril's hair. DRAW.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: Power & Glory d. Saba Simba/Paul Diamond; (UPDATE) Ted DiBiase-Kerry Von Erich feud; Jake Roberts d. Bob Bradley; Undertaker d. Sonny Blaze; Bushwhackers d. Black Bart/Joe Mirto; (REPLAY) Simba d. Valentine by DQ after Jimmy Hart decks Valentine; Valentine d. Buddy Rose; Tugboat d. Dino Bravo; (From SUPERTAPE III) Marty Jannetty d. Paul Roma, Barbarian vs. Jimmy Snuka, OUTRAGEOUS HITS; Orient Express d. Terry Davis/Cliff Sheets; Legion of Doom d. Cleo Reed/Doug Vines. RESTHOLD.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - Rico Frederico/Dr. Proctor d. Poison Ivy/Pipeline Fever; Lou Perez d. Rex King; Debbie Drake d. Luna Vachon. BOMB-PLUS.

(LUCHA LIBRE) - Ciclon Ramirez/El Justiciero/El Felino d. El Sultan Gargola/Comando Ruso/Canelo Casas 2-3 falls by 3rd fall DQ when Canelo removed Ciclon's mask; El Vulcano/El Bestia Salvaje/Tony Arce d. Mogur/Javier Cruz/Javier Valaguez 2-3; El Gran Markus Jr./El Angel Blanco Jr./El Hijo del Gladiador d. Angel Azteca/El Volador/El Misterioso 2-3; Mascara Sagrada/Ringo Mendoza/El Rayo de Jalisco Jr. d. Pierroth Jr./Hombre Bala/Kung Fu 2 straight falls. BOMB-PLUS.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Power & Glory d. Bucky Wagner/Rich Gale; Bushwhackers d. Dale Wolfe/Buddy Rose; (From ROYAL RUMBLE) Hulk Hogan wins RUMBLE, (WWF TITLE) Sgt. Slaughter d. Ultimate Warrior for belt when Randy Savage clobbers Ult w. Macho King sceptre; Other winners: Earthquake, Jake Roberts. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[SUPERSTARS]: (From ROYAL RUMBLE) 1) (ANGLE) Sherri Martel attempts to lure Ultimate Warrior into WWF title match for Randy Savage, 2) (WWF TITLE) Slaughter d. Warrior, 3) Hogan post-match celebration of RUMBLE win; The Mountie d. Reno Riggins; L.O.D. d. Vines/Reed; Davey Boy Smith d. Joe Turner; Rick Martel d. Allan Reynolds. RESTHOLD.

(LPWA) - Terri Power d. Rusty Thompson; Reggie Bennett d. Diane Von Hoffman; (ANGLE) Wally Karbo suspends Bugaloo Brown for 30 days; Misty Blue Simmes/Heidi Lee Morgan d. Nasty Girls; The Beast d. Cheryl Rush; Bad, Black & Beautiful d. Ilona Starr/Maria Alvarez; Bambi d. Magnificent Mimi by DQ. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(USWA/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Festus d. Bubba Fangman; Akira Nogami d. Ed Robinson (Scotty the Body parades at ringside during match); Ray Evans d. One Man Gang by DQ when Gang hits Evans & ref w. chair; Jeff Gaylord d. Jimmy James; (SOUTHERN TITLE) Eddie Gilbert d. Jeff Jarrett on reversal to retain belt when, after Jeff pins Eddie, he's caught w. Eddie's chain. RESTHOLD.

[BEST OF CHAMPIONSHIP]: Fabulous Ones d. O'Reilly/Rush; (ANGLE) Cornette/Fabs turn on Jerry Lawler when Corny

bashes Lawler w. racket; Terrence Garvin d. Freezer Thompson; Danny Davis d. Michael Green; New Kids/Cody Michaels/Jerry Lynn draw vs. Tony Anthony/Doug Gilbert/Sam Lowe/Joseph Magliano. RESTHOLD.

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating.

(PRO WRESTLING '90) - Trial (Part II) ends without decision on whether Jim Powell/Festus can retain Ga. tag belts; Billy Black/Mr. Wrestling d. Blazers; (From LPWA) Power/Starr d. Bad, Black & Beautiful; (CLASSIC) Tony Anthony d. Chris Champion; (INTL MATCH) Stamps d. Baker; (REPLAY/GA. TAG TITLE) Dingdongs (Powell/Festus) d. Black/Mr. W. RESTHOLD.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - (1983) Dino Bravo/Steve O d. Ken Patera/Jerry Blackwell; (VIDEO) Jesse Ventura; (1982) Ventura d. The Crusher; (RECAP) 40-year history of the AWA. NO RATING OFFERED.

(IWCCW) - Ricky Sullivan/Tower of Power d. Mad Russians; Miami Kid d. Hawaiian Hurricane; Million \$ Babies d. John Future/David Jet; Texas Terminator d. Dave Allen; Undertakers d. Bob Emory/Ivory. BOMB-PLUS.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: (NWA TV TITLE) Tom Zenk d. Moondog Rex; Minotaur d. Keith Hart; Master Blasters d. Tim Parker/Scott Allen; Rick Steiner d. Mike Samples; Brian Pillman d. Lt. James Earl Wright & chases both of State Patrol w. double dropkick; (WNN) Gordon reviews Paul E./Missy Hyatt "workout" videos, recaps Scott Steiner-Ric Flair showdown in Meadowlands hallway; Terry Taylor d. Joe Barrett. RESTHOLD.

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: Ricky Morton d. Rip Rogers; (REPLAY) Morton-Taylor standoff; Sid Vicious d. Greg Sawyer; (WRAPUP) Gordon Solie w. Flair-Steiner Meadowlands standoff, recap of last week's 8-man tag match; Tim Horner d. Sheik Ali Shikar; Michael Wallstreet d. Allen; DOOM d. Samples/Mike Hart; Scott Steiner d. John Peterson; Royal Family d. Keith Hart/Larry Santo; Barry Windham/Arn Anderson d. Carl Robertson/Rick Ford; (RECAP) Paul E./Missy saga & workout videos; (VIDEO) Horemeyn in "Basic Training"; (REPLAY) Bobby Eaton attacks Tom Zenk; Eaton d. Brett Sawyer; Renegade Warriors d. State Patrol; (ANGLE) Renegades/Barry & Arn brawl at show's end; Other winners: Freebirds. RESTHOLD.

(WCW/SYN) - [WORLD WIDE]: DOOM d. Sawyer/Parker; Anderson d. Eaton holding trunks & ropes; Wallstreet d. Santo; Scott Steiner d. Samples; Lex Luger d. Magnum Force I; Vicious d. Brian Worley. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[WCW PRO]: Anderson/Windham d. Tommy Rich/Morton; [DANGER ZONE] Paul E. w. Teddy Long/Ron Simmons but jobber attacks Simmons during DZ. Ron destroys him; (WCW TV TITLE) Zenk d. Eaton to retain belt; Brian Pillman d. Bill Ford; Vicious d. Todd Galinia & Sid bashes Todd w. stretcher after; Steiners d. Rob Morgan/Samples. DRAW-PLUS.

(USWA/WMC) - (OPEN) Downtown Bruno appears in tuxedo & says he's now UPTOWN BRUNO; Lawler d. Terrence Garvin by countout when Garvin flees after Lawler gets scissors to cut Terry's hair; (REPLAY) Cornette/Fabs attack Lawler; (From MID-SOUTH) Fabs d. Lawler/Bill Dundee by DQ when Dundee bashes Fabs w. Cornette's racket. After, Fabs hang Bill over rope, Corny works over Lawler/Jeff Jarrett w. racket. Jeff finally saves

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w. USWA tag belt on Fabs; Gaylord/Brian Lee d. T.D. Steel/Thompson; Michaels/Lynn d. Sgt. O'Reilly/Michael Rush in 17 seconds; (ANGLE) Bruno taunts Michaels/Lynn until Anthony/Doug Gilbert Pearl Harbor Cody & Jerry until the faces juice. Lawler/New Kids/Ben Jordan save; (VIDEO) Jarrett "America the Beautiful" montage; Other winner: Danny Davis. RESTHOLD.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Sean Mooney, WWF-SU: "I think I would pass on an opportunity to tour the Barbarian's trophy room." 2. Barry Windham, WWW, on Wallstreet/York: "I'm sure he's punching a few more than her computer chips." 3. Jim Cornette, LPWA, on Wally Karbo: "He's 174 years old and he's never looked any better, though he has looked worse." 4. Paul E. Dangerously/Jim Ross, WCW: (JR) "Your career as a commentator has been kinda like James Dean---short but great. Mickey Rooney...Lord Littlebrook---short but great. (PED) "Kinda like your love life---short but great." Jimmy Garvin, WCW PRO, to Lance Russell: "WORLD TO LANCE...WORLD TO LANCE!" 5. Steve Lawler, WWEU, on Samuel P. Kent: "I used to call him Catfish...he was all tail and no mouth." 6. Cornette, LPWA: "The people who don't want to wear fur are the people who can't even afford polyester." 7. Uptown Bruno, WMC: "It's UPTOWN Bruno now. I can't expect you to get that right, Dave. You can't even get the weather right." 8. Ross, PH, on Minotaur: "You don't see a guy like that at the IHOP." 9. Bobby Heenan, WWF-C, on Shane Douglas: "He talks about adversity. Is he Dobie Gillis?" 10. Steve (Prichard) Studwell, WWEU: "Boni Blackstone, I know you just got married. But now that I'm out here, you've got time to get it annulled."

11. Scotty the Body, USWA, on Joe Pedicino/Craig Johnson: "I've got it. You're Abbott and you're Costello. No, that's wrong. You're Laurel and you're Hardy." 12. Paul E., WCW, on Sid Vicious instant replay: "This ought to be the BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD Instant Replay." 13. Ric Flair, WCW: "When you think of WTBS, you think of the world's greatest romance: Ted Turner and Jane Fonda. And then, you think of Ric Flair." 14. Paul E., PH, on Master Blasters: "These guys are as solid as the automobiles built in Detroit." 15. Ron Simmons, WCW PRO: "This is my bread and butter. You can't buy butter if you don't have money." 16. Gordon Solie, WNN, on Paul E.: "I wonder if that verbal pomposity will last." 17. Ross, PH: "Marrying Alexandra York would be like a young Leona Helmsley." 18. Jeff Gaylord, WMC, to Dave Brown: "I always wanted to be a weatherman, Dave, but I'm not a nerd." 19. Scotty, USWA: "Nogami is in the twilight of a mediocre career." 20. Danny Davis, WMC: "Jeff Gaylord, you're gonna think I'm a Patriot missile."

21. Ross, PH, on State Patrol: "They remind me of a scene out of POLICE SQUAD!" 22. Kent, WWEU: "Who is that (Scott) Hudson? With a name like that, he's like one of them old cars." 23. Pedicino/Cornette, LPWA: (JP) "That remains to be seen, as a friend of ours would say." (JC) "Friend???" 24. Dan Farren, on WCW in L.A.: "It was like running into an old friend and about 15 minutes later, it began to get old."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Tony Schiavone, WWW: "Do I look like someone who would name Teddy Long THE GODFATHER?"

2. Jerry Lawler, WMC, on Bruno's tuxedo: "Hey, Bruno, what time you due back in the window at Woolworth's?" 3. Scotty, USWA, on Ed Robinson: "Who threw up on his tights?" 4. Paul E., WCW: "Did you know SANTO is Spanish for stupid?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. DUDLEY DO-RIGHT FROM HELL (Mooney on The Mountie). 2. DAVE BROWN, THE WEATHER CLOWN (Bruno on Dave). 3. UNCLE GORDON (Paul E. on Solie). 4. BARNEY & GOMER (Ross on State Patrol). 5. THE WALKING RIOT (Scott Hudson, WWEU, on Missy Hyatt). 6. BLOATED, BALDHEADED BENEDICT ARNOLD (Hudson on Sgt. Slaughter).

BEST PICTURES - 1. TAG TEAM (ABC), Roddy Piper/Jesse Ventura doing hurdles. 2. TAG TEAM (ABC), Piper/Ventura busting up holdup in grocery store. 3. TAG TEAM, Ventura's police uniform ripping when he flexed. 4. WMC, Uptown Bruno choking Lawler. 5. WMC, Jeff Jarrett "America" video. 6. LPWA, Cornette holding the bell after Lady X/Reggie Bennett brawl.

BEST AUDIO - Ron Simmons, WWW, saying, "Ah, come on, Godfather," to Teddy Long when T.L. ordered 2 pins interrupted.

ENGLISH LESSON - Michael Hayes, WCW PRO, on Vicious: "He's TOOK it up another notch."

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - LPWA, for only having house mike up for Cornette/Pedicino lead-in to Wally Karbo segment.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Vince McMahon, WWF-SU: "...time will tell." 2. Jimmy Garvin, WCW PRO: "...mountain out of a molehill."

BOO AWARD - WWF, and they'll continue to get one for every weekend they continue to pursue their tasteless fairy tale.

In case you wondered, the thinking on replaying the CLASH immediately after the first-run is a chance to boost its same-night ratings on the West Coast but the two will still be figured separately....WMC had to move the USWA for the fourth straight Saturday. This time, to 11:30 because of an NBC special edition of TODAY....We continue to get mixed reports on whether WWF will air a two-hour special on FOX Feb. 23. Some sources say yes but at the NATPE meet, FOX sources were saying no. We'll try to get confirmation from ELECTRONIC MEDIA this week....At a recent George Washington University basketball game, the crowd held up a sign: CRAIG JOHNSON RULES....Alex Trebek beat out Craig for the nod as new host of TO TELL THE TRUTH.

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TALK

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MATWATCHING

EDDIE, THE FREE AGENT: Eddie Gilbert is considering proposals from four wrestling associations. He says he is not waiting on Global to get underway. Gilbert has been skiing in Vail CO.

GET 'EM, DAVE: I'll defer Dave Meltzer to tell specifics of his story but the efforts of Vince McMahon to intimidate THE NATIONAL and Dave are reprehensible. Reminds me of the time a U.S. Congressman tried to have me fired for reporting damaging information on his efforts with a superhighway.

VINCE'S SPONSORS: In case you want to write, WWF syndie sponsors include Stridex, Greyhound and Campho-Phenique.

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: Jerry Lawler and Jeff Jarrett met The Fabulous Ones for the USWA tag title. Also, a REDMAN RUMBLE ROYAL with WWF rules.

A BIG GAP: Eddie's touch is missing already from the WMC shows. Saturday's program really dragged with only one minor angle and far too much talk.

THE GULAS LEGEND: One story on the death of promoter Nick Gulas...once, an ice and snow storm forced an early press run for the local paper. Gulas was told his wrestling results could not be published. He reportedly said, "Oh, that's all right. I'll give you the results right now because I know who's gonna win."

ERRATA: But THE TENNESSEAN erred in saying Gulas was the first promoter in the U.S. to stage live TV matches. That began in 1941 in Los Angeles.

WEST COAST WOBBLES: Crowds of about 2,500 each saw WCW in San Francisco and L.A. last week. But lots of anger in L.A. Only four of eight advertised matches were held. Of the seven bouts, three featured Buzz Sawyer's wrestling school students.

ANOTHER LOSS: WCW has apparently been bumped in Sacramento-Stockton and reader Floyd Perry Jr. is calling for a write-in campaign to restore it.

TOKYO DOME TALES: Ric Flair will defend the NWA belt against

Tatsumi Fujinami in the March Japan show. We should have the full card next week.

"MAIN EVENT" PREDICTIONS: I don't really a forecast a high rating for the NBC MAIN EVENT special this Friday. For one thing, it won't be live (taped in Macon GA Monday), Slaughter-Duggan is not a big draw and if the war is heating up, ABC's 20/20 will get the bulk of the audience.

SLAMMERS ELITE: Verne Langdon is having a "Closed Open House" at SLAMMERS WRESTLING GYM in Studio City CA the day of WRESTLEMANIA. It will be an "invitation only" affair.

CAULIFLOWER ALLEY: The night before (March 23), expect a big nostalgic celebration at Studio City's Sportsman Lodge for the annual Cauliflower Alley Club banquet. Terry Funk and Lou Thesz are among those being honored this year.

THE TOURNEY: The "trial" to determine if Jim Powell & Festus should hold the Georgia tag belts ended in a "hung jury," so a tourney is being held on TV over the next four weeks.

GOOD LUCK, SCOTT: My good friend Scott Hudson is off to a tremendous start doing color on GEORGIA ALL-STAR WRESTLING. His FAN'S PERSPECTIVE segments on WVEU-TV in Atlanta are nicely done and Scott shows good poise.

A PLEA: Yes, I do need a post card from some good soul to get the UWF results in TV TEMPO. We don't have SPORTS CHANNEL AMERICA here and my Chicago sources often find UWF pre-empted for Black Hawks hockey.

STILL TO COME: Expect a major story in the Denver-based publication, WESTWARD, on efforts of local promoters to take on the majors.

ALSO IN PRINT: FORBES Magazine is preparing a big piece on the Road Warriors' clothing company. Writer Vicki Contavespi is doing it. She and a collaborator are also planning a book on wrestling.

THE OTHER EARTHQUAKE: In case you've wondered whatever happened to former AWA wrestler Earthquake Ferris, he showed up at the WCW L.A. show. Did a job for a guy named Big Mike Huff.

COMING UP: Next week, we're planning your letters on the Slaughter angle and in 2 weeks, a big SHOPPERS NETWORK.

ROTUNDA BOLTS WCW

ATLANTA----Former NWA and WWF world tag team co-champion Mike Rotunda, whose Michael Wallstreet character has revived a declining career, has left World Championship Wrestling, Inc.

Rotunda departed after apparently only being offered a six-month extension on his contract and failure to reach agreement on salary.

The nine-year veteran has been in the NWA since departing the WWF in 1987.

GRAHAM GETS WCW SLOT

ATLANTA----Former Florida champion Mike Graham is taking an in-ring slot with World Championship Wrestling, Inc.

Graham, 38, is being brought in by booker Virgil Runnels as WCW junior heavyweight champion, a title Graham once held in the NWA.

The son of the late Eddie Graham has actively pursued his Florida promotion the last three years but sources say he has recently has encountered financial difficulties.

GULAS DEAD AT 76

NASHVILLE---Veteran southeastern wrestling promoter Nick Gulas, who once boosted the fortunes of Hulk Hogan and Jerry Lawler, died Jan. 21 following an extended illness.

Gulas, 76, was a native of Birmingham, and promoted from 1947-1980. THE TENNESSEAN reported Gulas once promoted in 48 different cities.

His first bouts were staged at the Hippodrome Skating Rink in Nashville and later moved to the Tennessee State Fairgrounds.

CORNY/FABS EXTENDED

MEMPHIS----The Fabulous Ones-Jerry Lawler/Jeff Jarrett USWA program is being extended through at least through March 4.

Fabs manager Jim Cornette is in the process of nailing down additional dates for the series, originally scheduled to end Feb. 4.

MATWATCH

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PRIME TIME TAKES 2 STRAIGHT

In the wake of the ROYAL RUMBLE and without Monday night football competition, USA Network's PRIME TIME WRESTLING has scored two consecutive victories in the weekly Nielsen cable ratings race.

Last Monday, two nights after Sgt. Slaughter's WWF title victory at the ROYAL RUMBLE (though no clips were shown), PTW posted a 3.0 rating and 4.3 per cent share for an easy win over Sunday's ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING (2.3) and an unusually low 2.2 for the special Sunday night WCW/MAIN EVENT double-header on TBS.

The week before, PTW's 2.7 barely nosed out the 2.6 for the Saturday night WCW, which was up against NFL playoff competition.

After three weeks of rallies, ALL-AMERICAN numbers have been dipping again, partially because of head-on matchups against the NFL. The Jan. 13 edition on USA only posted a 2.1/4.7, down 25 per cent from the strong 2.8 on Jan. 6.

The rough spot for TBS continues to be Saturday morning's POWER HOUR, which gained to a 1.7/6.3 Jan. 12, its best spot in seven weeks, before falling 18 per cent to a 1.4 on the 19th and a perilous 3.9% share.

CABLE

Week Ending Jan. 21	Rating	Share	Total Homes
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 1/21)	3.0	4.3	1.64 million
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 1/20)	2.3	4.6	1.26 million
WCW SUN. SPECIAL EDITION (TBS 1/20)	2.2	3.3	1.23 million
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 1/19)	1.4	3.9	784,000

Week Ending Jan. 14	Rating	Share	Total Homes
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 1/14)	2.7	4.0	1.47 million
WCW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 1/12)	2.6	4.4	1.46 million
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 1/13)	2.3	3.7	1.29 million
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 1/13)	2.1	4.7	1.14 million
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 1/12)	1.7	6.3	927,000

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RATINGS RAP

Our sporadic reports on syndicated ratings have revived, at least temporarily. The first numbers for 1990 show the WWF network posting an 8.0 on a smaller lineup of stations because of basketball and NFL playoff pre-emptions. WCW's WRESTLING NETWORK held to a 5.8, which included the first Horsemen junkyard video.

SYNDICATION

Week Ending 1/6	Rating	Stations	Pct. U.S.	Homes
WWF NETWORK	8.0	216	96%	7.46 million
WCW NETWORK	5.8	157	93%	5.41 million

Instant Review

TAG TEAM GETS ABC ONE SHOT

It may have had a chance for a short life but one will never know. Touchstone Television's TAG TEAM, starring Roddy Piper and Jesse Ventura, aired in pilot form last Saturday night and while the script was weak, the premise may have had prospects with some fleshing out of the characters.

Piper and Ventura played a wrestling tag team kicked out of the business after defeating the Samurai Brothers (Pat Tanaka and Akio Sato) in an excessively violent fashion against a promoter's wishes.

The episode told a reasonable story of how the two struggled to make a living until they encountered a holdup in a grocery store and broke it up, capturing the crooks by using wrestling maneuvers rather than bullets. The pair proceeded through the police academy and solved their first case in their unorthodox approach.

The cops-with-a-twist format would have been different and versatile because of the uniqueness of using wrestlers. However, the hour appeared uneven, at times venturing too far into a spoof of police action dramas. The camera likes the faces of Ventura and Piper but the writers appeared to be too soft on the dialogue in a stab at keep their strong wrestling personalities from wearing against the grain of the story.

TAG TEAM had originally been penciled as a Saturday night effort for either 8 or 9 p.m. but was too soft for the 10 p.m. slot in which it aired. Whether a mainline public in which non-wrestling buffs would have been unfamiliar with Piper and Ventura would have bought it for a season is doubtful. Obviously, ABC thought not. Ratings next week.

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